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Facets

Fac•et - n. 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.

2. The particular angle from which something is considered

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exploring faith | EVERYDAY LIFE

How does your faith help you in your everyday life?

By ROSE E. ELSBECKER

People from all walks of life and a wide variety of faith backgrounds answered this question.

From high school students about to embark upon college or a new career, to seniors who had weathered a multitude of life experiences, some common themes were discovered. The majority of people related that faith, along with prayer, was something they turned to on an everyday basis as a source of strength, comfort, hope and guidance. Others, such as **CHERIE WEBBER**, a young business woman in her 30s, shared with us that she was still sorting out her faith, still growing, still seeking. Webber relates that she turns to her family for strength.

LAVONNE WATKINS, a middle-aged grandmother, and an avid gardener, is a down-toearth sort of person, someone who has
always been active in her local church.
Watkins says she believes that prayer is simply talking to God and that she feels she can
talk to him anytime, anywhere, and does talk
to him throughout the day as she goes about
her daily business. Watkins says, "God is in
the present," and he is there to help in the
now.

JINITA BOYD, an avid reader who loves to travel and remains active at her local YWCA, says faith is an important part of her daily existence. Boyd says prayer is an important part of her daily life and that God is someone who she can turn to talk to at any moment in time

HELEN SETTLE, 85, a Quaker and retired nurse of 40 years, is also an avid gardener and stays active in missions with her church. Faith is a part of every facet of her life, she says. God is a source of strength for her, and that is what helped her to deal with the deep sense of loss when she lost her devoted husband of many years. With the help of her faith, she has since moved forward, finding joy in little things and a new sense of purpose in reaching out to help others along the way.

YVONNE DAVIDSEN, a former school volunteer coordinator, who loves to read and





JINITA BOYD

CHRIS TULLIS

enjoys attending community concerts along with her husband, says her faith is an important part of her everyday life. She too has turned to her faith as a source of strength to help her deal with loss. Her daughter, Cheryl, was a young woman in her 20s when she lost her battle with cancer after enduring six long years of treatment with her family beside her every step of the way.

BETHANY WIRIN is a new mother to twins. "Being sleep-deprived, I pray for strength," she says. "A lack of sleep can kind of fray your nerves." She prays for God to help her to stay positive and to be joyful.

SHIRLEY CALZADA is a gourmet cook and artist who comes from a Catholic background. Calzada has a wonderful smile and a great sense of humor. Her family has always believed strongly in prayer. She too, looks to her faith as something that is always there to help her through the day. Calzada puts it aptly when she says, "It helps me to feel like someone is always in my corner."

CHRIS TULLIS, a dedicated teacher and a devoted mom, says, "God is always there, and he is there in the little things, too."

Then there is **DANIELLE PROPST**, an honors student and a senior at Marshalltown High School, who recently was one of 98 representatives that gathered in Washington, D.C., last spring as a part of Girls Nation. As part of a workshop, Propst says, the girls talked about their different faith backgrounds. Through this exercise, she says, they discovered that they had a lot in common, more similarities than differences.

www.amesracfit.com

Having faith takes trust

By JENN BOCCELLA

o you pray? Why? What is faith? Whom or what do you put faith in? What does it look like?

Initially, the focus of this article was clearly

defined. It was simply a matter of gathering the responses to those questions from a wide variety of women and compiling them into a straightforward yet interesting story. But upon sitting down to write, the piece began to take a different direction.



JENN BOCCELLA

Over the last year, every monthly write-up I have done has never been from my perspective; yes, it has my voice behind it, but my personal point of view has been excluded. This time, however, is different. And it is mostly because of the topic: faith.

While I am confident in my spiritual beliefs, asking a number of women about theirs caused me to question mine. Not because I am unsure or wavering in them, but because as a woman who is months away from graduating and preparing to head into the "real world," I consider it essential to know why I believe what I believe.

Although writing comes naturally and at times can go beyond something of a passion, I do not think in words. Instead, as a friend, family member, or even a professor tells a story or describes something, I visualize it. Sometimes it is almost as if there is a miniature movie screen playing in my mind; that is how vibrantly I picture things. The same thing happens when I think of a concept or an idea such as faith.

When I received this assignment, immediately my brain started generating a picture. I remembered back to when I was in high school, maybe even middle school, and had experienced some teambuilding exercises. It was an exercise that correlates perfectly to my understanding of faith.

My teammates and I were asked to group together, in a huddle of sorts. One by one, our coach would pull someone from the group, away from the protection and security of being surrounded by others, and ask them to climb a three-step stool he had set out a few feet away from the rest of the bunch. Standing on the stool and looking down on everyone was really intimidating. While everyone else stood comfortably on the ground, encompassed by 15 other girls, all alone one would teeter on the edge of that wobbly stool, feeling insecure and unsure.

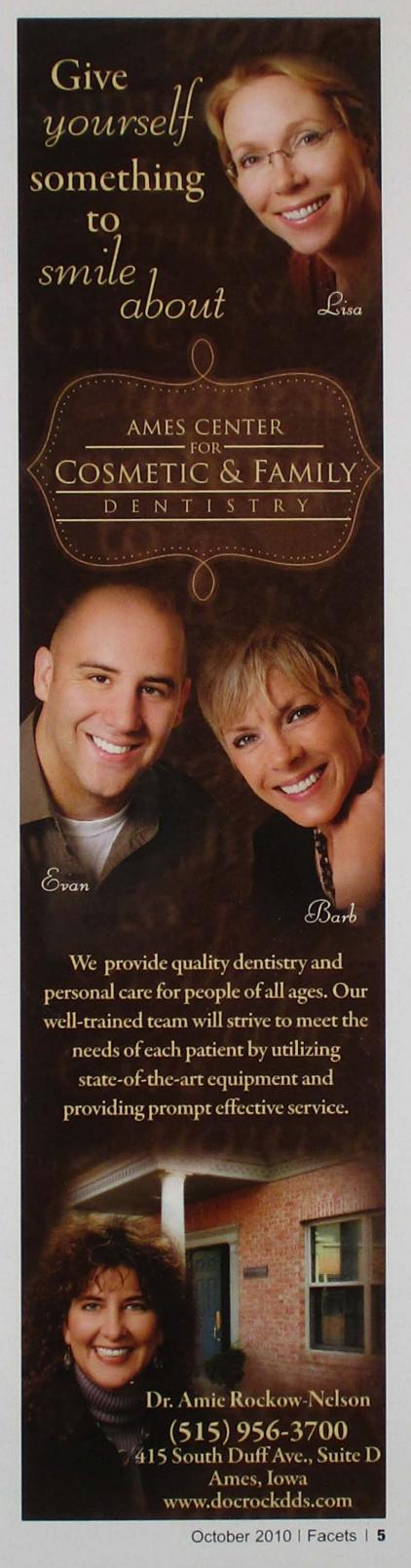
The exercise was far from over. As if the uncomfortable and awkward sense of loneliness wasn't enough, coach would then ask the girl on the stool to turn around, with her back facing the rest of the girls standing below. Despite knowing full well the rest of the team was only three feet directly below her, she could not see them; the girl was not only singled out, but left with an extreme sense of uncertainty.

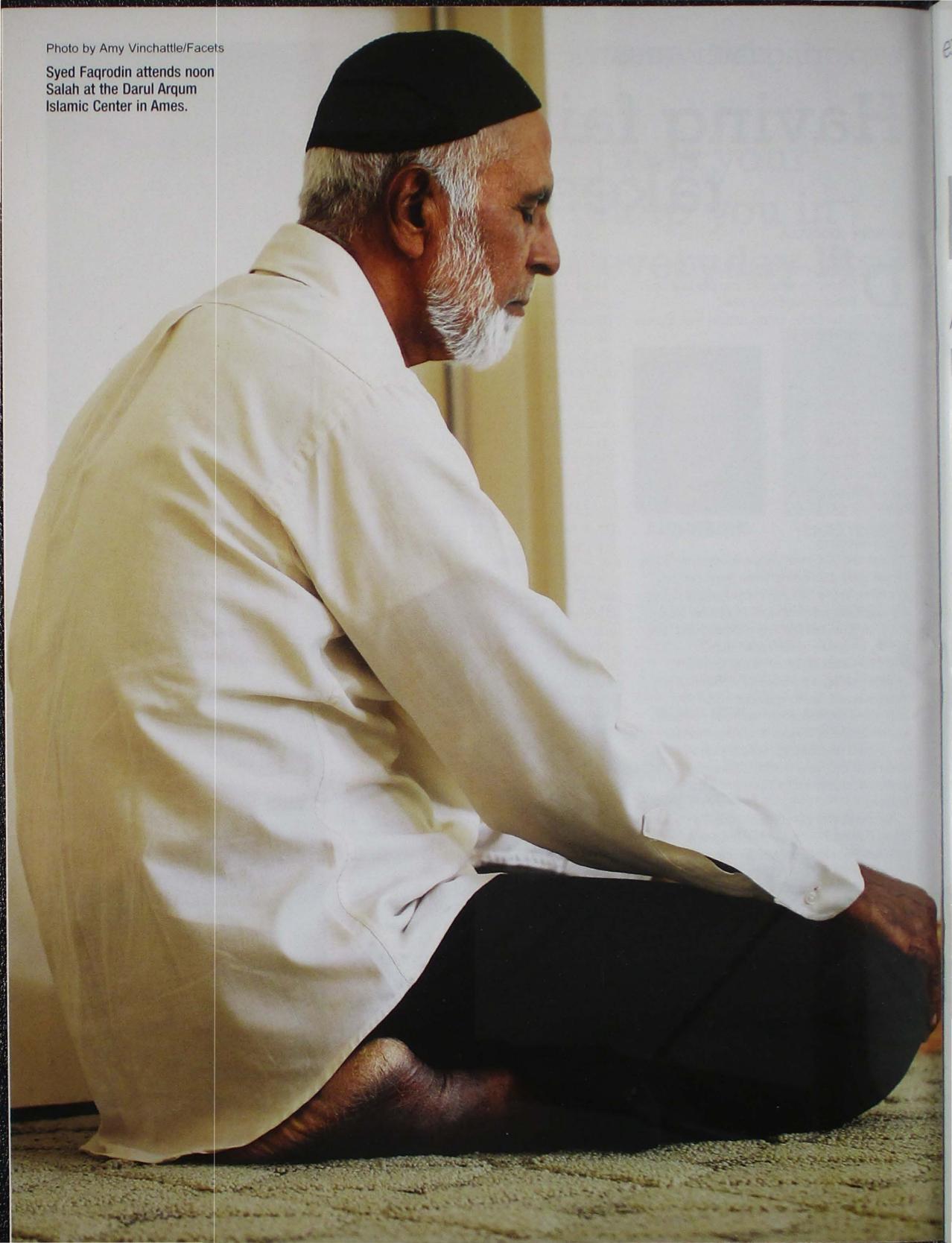
Coach then asked the girl to close her eyes and cross her arms over her chest, forming an X. After she complied, he would ask her one question: "Do you trust your teammates?" The girl would respond by nodding her head or saying yes. Finally, the meaning of the exercise came into play as coach gave her a simple instruction: fall.

In that moment, each teammate had to decide between choosing to fall backwards and trust that her unseen teammates would catch her, or to walk away. That day every girl chose to trust what she could not see behind her, and every girl was caught by her teammates. In an exercise of trust, we all learned to have faith in one another.

Over the last couple of weeks as I asked multiple women about their prayer life and faith, this memory kept coming to mind. As I heard women cite similar and sometimes very different answers about their faith, I kept coming back to the idea that faith is a choice. It is personal. No one can make you have faith. Just as the girl standing alone on that stool had a choice, so do you and I. We can walk away, or we can cross our arms, close our eyes and fall, trusting things we cannot see or sometimes even fully grasp will catch us.

So, when it is your turn to stand up on the stool, away from the security of what you know, will you teeter in your faith that what you cannot see will catch you? Or will you willingly and confidently fall backwards? Why? It is a question worth asking yourself.





Ames woman shares what it's like to be a Muslim in America

By LAURA MILLSAPS

How do you practice your faith? Is there a certain holiday that has personal meaning to you?

Muslims pray five times daily at certain times of the day. Once a year, we fast during a month called Ramadan and give to charity. Once in a lifetime we make a pilgrimage, or Hajj, to Mecca.

During Ramadan, which is the ninth month of the lunar calendar, we refrain from eating, drinking and fulfilling our desires from dawn to sunset. Fasting is a time to reflect on our lives and how we enjoy many blessings that we take them for granted.

After sunset, we break our fast with a few dates, a little water. Then we pray, and afterward we eat a meal. People look at fasting as being a negative, but it is really a quite joyful experience. You appreciate things so much more.

I think it is especially important to set this example for children. I think today our children are very spoiled. They don't think about how others suffer or reflect on how much we have. One month of the year, we are able to do this.

Muslims are required to give to charity during this time as a way of sharing this year, and the mosque is collecting food and money to give to the local food pantries. We are part of our community and want to share what we have with the community.

ABOUT NERMIN SABRY

Nermin Sabry has lived in Ames for nine years and attends the Darul Argum Islamic Center. She was born a Sunni Muslim.

JOB AND EDUCATION: Sabry is a schoolteacher and the principal at the weekend Islamic school in Ames. She has a bachelor's degree in communication and journalism from the University of Cairo and a master's degree in education from Iowa State University.

FAMILY: Married to Ahmed Kamal, a professor of computer and electrical engineering at ISU. Four children: Mohammed, 29; Mona, 27; Heba, 22, and Youssef, 17.

You teach school at the mosque. Why is education important to your faith?

My children are Muslim, but they are Americans. It is has been my concern to raise them as American kids at the same time keeping their Muslim identity. They want to "fit." I want them to feel proud to be Americans and proud to be Muslim.

I teach teenagers at the mosque, and I feel it is important because they have no sources to learn about their faith except from their families. It is a very challenging time, and we need to teach them to be good citizens, but in a way that they do not jeopardize their religion or values. We want them to be comfortable being both fully American and fully Muslim. I want them to know if they are proud of both, if they fulfill the expectations of both, people will respect them more.

Is it hard to raise children Muslim in a non-Muslim world?

Some acts of worship in Islam need to be explained so people can understand their nature, especially in schools. We pray five times a day, and often at least one of those times can fall within school hours. (Most schools now allow students to use some areas in the facility to pray). During Ramadan, Muslim children need options to be away from lunchrooms.

You have to work with the child and with the system so that they can fulfill their obligations to their faith without breaking the rules the school has about separation of religion and government.

I raised three of our children in Canada in the '80s, and the system is very similar to the U.S. We have lived in Ames for nine years. It is a lot easier now. People are more aware of Islam. It is now easier to say, "It is the month of Ramadan," and people have heard of it before. You are not always explaining.

What is it like for you to be a Muslim in a non-Muslim world?

I am very frustrated by the media right now. You almost never see a · moderate Muslim in the media, and it is hard when people's perception about you is not good. I feel that it is very important for me as a moderate Muslim to fix that by my words and actions. Because of my educational background, because I have lived both in this country and in a Muslim country, I can tell whether something is objective or cooked. Then, when I go back to Egypt to visit I am the same kind of ambassador there for Americans, because their image of the United States is also not good, and often from what they see in the news. I tell them "these are the politicians talking. Real Americans are not like that."

Story continued on page 8

exploring faith ISLAM

What do you want people to understand about your faith?

I want people from different religions and sects to understand that tolerance, respect and acceptance is the only way for people from different religions to co-exist together. Extremism is something that everyone from different religions should refuse and decline. Unfortunately, extremism is a word that is mentioned only with Islam and Muslims.

We have been building mosques in this country for decades without any problems. Now, things are starting to go in a different direction. People are taking negative actions against Islam that are as extreme as anyone displaying hate from Islam. This is not good for any of us. If we go this way, we will never have any ease after that. This is not a good interfaith environment.

How is your experience different than what you see in the

My experience is with real people, with neighbors, people from the community that we meet in different interfaith activities. We listen to each other and share opinions without being influenced by the views in the media.

Really, the similarities between ourselves and our community are many, and the differences very few. Families, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, share the same values. We want to raise our children well; we want them to become good members of society. We care about our kids, our lives, our country. We disagree over some things, but disagreements do not need to make us enemies.

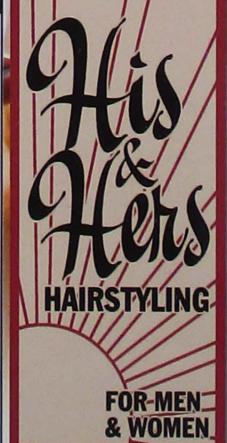
ABOUT ISLAM

- . Based on the Muslim holy book, the Qu'ran.
- . Muslims believe in one god, Allah.
- Muslims believe in the teachings of the prophet, Muhammad.
- . Muslims believe in the Five Pillars of Islam, which are the mandatory religious rituals of Islam.
- 1. Shahadah statement professing the belief in one God and accepting Muhammad as God's messenger.
- 2. Salah (Salat) daily prayers, five of them said at different times during every day.
 - Zakat giving 2.5 percent of one's income to charity.
- 4. Sawm (Siyam) three types of fasting that are recognized in Islam which are ritual fasting, fasting to repent and acetic fasting.
 - Hajj a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca.
 - Most belong to one of two denominations: Sunni or Shi'a.
 - Islam is the second-largest religion in the world.
 - Islam is found in every part of the world.
- . Muslims believe that if they live a good life they will go to Jannah (similar to heaven in Christianity).
- Muslims believe that Allah has predetermined every part of your life (predestination).
- Ramadan Ninth month in Islamic calendar. The month of fasting. During this month, Muslims refrain from eating from dawn until sunset to humble themselves before god and to teach them patience.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam



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Judaism in Ames

By MARY HALSTRUM

hen Carole Horowitz, a writer and community arts activist, moved from New York to Ames in 1961, the city had no formal place for Jews to worship. She and her husband joined a synagogue in Des Moines. As more and more Jewish families came to Ames, a congregation was established. In 1976, members of the Ames Jewish Congregation built a home of their own, following the Reform tradition.

Through the years, the congregation has been served by parttime rabbis. Some have been students from the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio. Currently, David Wirtschafter, an ordained rabbi, is its spiritual leader.

The Horowitz family continued their affiliations in both Ames and Des Moines.

"Our boys had their Bar Mitzvahs in Des Moines and were confirmed here in Ames," she

Barbara Pleasants has lived in Ames for 31 years. She teaches a Holocaust class at Iowa State University, which she says is a very popular class. The Holocaust was a systematic, statesponsored extermination by Nazi Germany of six million Jews, or about two-thirds of the population of nine million Jews who had resided in Europe before the Holocaust.

"There is enormous student interest, and most of my students are non-Jewish," she says. "Many of them say it is the best course they've taken because it raises some deep issues they've never had to face before."

Pleasants had two uncles survive the Holocaust, and her mother was born in Poland.

Only now, she says, have the number of Jews worldwide returned to the pre-Holocaust level.



At the heart of all Judaism is the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, which contains instructions from God on how to behave in a holy manner.

"For much of European history, Jews couldn't own land. Jews couldn't farm. So education became a priority. They became professionals," Horowitz says. "That's why so many are lawyers, doctors and business owners."

In Reform and Conservative Judaism, women and men are regarded as equals. There are women rabbis, and women have an equal place in the congregation.

"Judaism is a religion of how to live; we are directed on how to behave ethically," Pleasants says.

In other words, Jews are expected to be good for being good's sake.

The basic difference between Judaism and Christianity is that Christians believe Jesus was the savior and the messiah, a concept not accepted in Judaism, Pleasants says.

"We respect those who worship differently than we do," she says, "and we hope it's reciprocated."

"I like Ames," Horowitz says. "People are open and want to know about — and have a respect for — other people's religions."

ABOUT JUDAISM

- Today, more than 14 million people identify themselves as Jewish and nearly 3.5 billion others follow belief systems directly influenced by Judaism (including Christianity, Islam and the Bah'ai faith). (Source: www. religionfacts.com)
- Scripture is the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) written in Hebrew.
- Judaism was the first monotheistic religion. The central prayer is "Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."
- At the heart of all Judaism is the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, which contains instructions from God on how to behave in a holy manner.
- Jews are commanded to perform acts of charity and social justice.
- Judaism is more concerned about actions than beliefs.
- Jews don't concern themselves with speculation about life after death. Hell is not a Jewish concept.
- Jewish children attend religious schools where they learn Jewish history, study the Torah and learn Hebrew.
- · Sabbath is observed from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday.
- Yearly cycle of holidays begins with Rosh Hashanah, New Year, in early fall, starting with a 10-day period of self examination. This period concludes on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, with communal prayers and a 24hour fast. Hannukah, a lesser holiday, commemorates a victory over imposed religious and cultural assimilation. Passover is observed in the spring and commemorates the exodus from Egypt.
- Orthodox Jews are strict in their observance while Reform Jews vary according to personal choice. Conservatives are somewhere in between. All three read from the Torah scrolls in the synagogue, observe the same holidays, recite the same prayers, and celebrate major life events with similar rituals.

Source: Barbara Pleasants, ISU professor

exploring faith | CATHOLICISM

Priests reflect on

decades of service

By CLARE BILLS

he Catholic Church has undergone enormous changes in the 54 years since two young Iowa men were ordained on Feb. 4, 1956. They met as undergraduates at Loras College in Dubuque and then spent another four years studying to become diocesan priests at Mount St. Bernard Seminary, also in Dubuque. Rev. Pat Geary and Rev. John Herzog have both served in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, which includes Arnes, teaching, preaching and shepherding large and small congregations in central and northeastern Iowa. Now retired, both men live independently in Ames, assisting area parishes and staying involved in issues they feel passionate about. For the past 40 years, they have belonged to the same priest support group.

They were interviewed separately and spoke candidly about the future of the priesthood, the sex abuse scandals and reflections on their experiences as Catholic priests.

Geary grew up in Oelwein, the fifth of six children. When he was 2 1/2, his mother died of diphtheria, leaving five sons and a nine-

month-old daughter.

Their father worked two jobs so he could afford live-in housekeepers to help him with the children.

"They were really surrogate mothers to us," Geary says.

Herzog grew up as the fourth of five boys on a farm in Dubuque County.

"Our farm was a half mile from the country parish, and we were there a lot."

Sometime in grade school, he started thinking about dedicating his life to the priesthood.

For Geary, the call came later.
"In high school I had a pastor



By Clare Bills/Facets

Rev. John Herzog, left, and Rev. Pat Geary, right, were ordained in 1956.

"When we were ordained, the church had been pretty much the same for 400 or 500 years. We thought everything would stay the same.
Then came the Second Vatican Council, and things started to look different."

who said to me over and over, 'You'd do well as a priest.''

In spite of this, he started Loras College intending to become a doctor. "After two years, I found I didn't have as much interest in chemistry, and I went to my professor who was also a priest. He had me take an interest inventory. The results showed my two areas of highest interest were to become either a priest or a doc-

tor. I chose to pursue the priesthood, and never had any more doubt about the decision."

Herzog also had no doubt that he was called to be a cleric, and both men said emphatically that they have no regrets, even though the journey was not always easy.

"When we were ordained, the church had been pretty much the same for 400 or 500 years. We thought everything would stay the same. Then came the Second Vatican Council (in the 1960s), and things started to look different. There was a lot of excitement about the church moving from being an institution to being a community. I was excited about this. We spoke a lot about the people of God. There was a new understanding about baptism and building the kingdom of God. That was the vision. The challenge was that not everyone was excited about the vision," Herzog says.

The priest sex abuse scandal has been another major challenge for the Catholic Church. Geary says it was a tragedy on many levels.

"The scandal really bothered

me. It may have contributed to the decline in vocations. I pray for the priests who've gotten into trouble. I'm not to be a judge of them."

Both men say the Church needs to open a discussion about allowing married men and women into the priesthood.

"Those of us that are older realize it's terribly sensible. My prediction is that any parish under 500 households will be closed in 10 years," Herzog says.

Geary says the most rewarding part of his vocation was officiating at the sacraments: marriage, baptism, communion, confession, anointing of the sick and
confirmation. "Seeing how God
has chosen to work with His people; I can't imagine life without
the sacraments."

Herzog agrees that "presiding at the Eucharist" has been the highlight of his priesthood. "And another part of the greatness would be facilitating and helping people with spiritual growth."

Both men regularly assist area parishes and enjoy traveling, reading and playing bridge. Herzog presides over a Spanish Mass every Sunday at St. Cecilia while Geary helps in an Arizona church each winter. You can usually find them at the daily noon Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas, where Geary served as pastor from 1980 to 1987.

Ever the shepherds, they offered a few pearls of wisdom for those seeking comfort or peace.

"Work at awareness that God is within you," Herzog says.

"Be aware of what is love. God loved us; then we came into existence. God continues to love us. How do we understand God's love in our lives? Don't worry that giving love away will lessen the love in your life. God will fill you up," Geary says.

exploring faith MEDITATION

Everyday meditation and positive affirmation

By ELAINE LENZ

editation is defined as "to engage in contemplation or reflection," in the Merriam Webster online dictionary. Type "affirmation" into Dictionary.com, and it says, "the act or an instance of affirming; state of being affirmed."

I have to be honest when I say I was probably one of the naïve ones who used to think meditating was narrowed to only those who cross their legs and hum. It was not until recently I realized I had been practicing meditation for most of my life.

Ever since I can remember, I have had some kind of daily devotional. This goes all the way back to my elementary days when each devotional consisted

only of a cute story and a bible verse that was maybe only a



ELAINE LENZ

page long. Yet even then my mind was quieted as I read the page before bedtime, and I drifted off to sleep thinking about what I'd

learned. It was a type of meditation.

This practice continued to get stronger as I went to college. I remember buying my devotional before I left for school and moved the two long hours from my childhood home. I was also armed with various books of inspirational quotes and many Chicken Soup books that I'd received for high school gradu-

ation. At the time, I didn't know how much those books would come in handy, but I'd soon learn.

As college began, my 10 minutes of quiet time with my devotional became the one thing that stayed constant. Even if I couldn't squeeze it in everyday, it was there when I needed it. Classes and roommates changed, even my focus in school changed, but the short time with my devotional stayed the same.

I've since graduated, gotten married and jumped with both feet into the working world, but you will still find a devotional on my bedside table. Someday when I can hopefully add "mother" to that list, I hope to pass this practice onto my son or daughter.

Now, having a devotional is

not the only way to meditate, and there are many positive affirmation books out there. If you search for "meditation" books on Amazon, more than 46,000 choices instantly appear. Search for "positive affirmation" books and more than 380 pop up. These books range from inspirational quotes, positive thinking and advice on how to meditate. There are positive affirmation books for men. women and children that cover how to focus on the positive in life. There are even books for kids who want to do well on tests. It's amazing what positive thinking can do.

The skinny? It seems one can meditate on anything; a good book, a life lesson, a message from a friend. The possibilities are endless.

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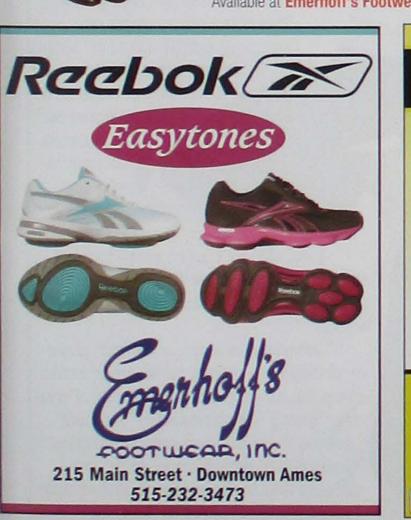
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fitness MIND-BODY CONNECTION

DEBRA

ATKINSON

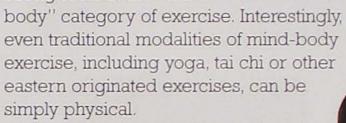
the Spirit of exercise

By DEBRA ATKINSON, M.S., C.S.C.S.

f T ronically, I just returned from the

woods. ... I started running but my soul really wanted to walk instead," says Julie Rastetter, who agreed to share her personal spiritual journey, of which yoga and nature both have been a part.

Yoga, of course, has strong roots in the "mind-



"It's more about the frame of mind you're in. Even with yoga, if your mind-set isn't there, then it's just exercise," Rastetter says.

Does it negate positive effects of exercise? Not necessarily. For many, the mind-body connection evolves once the initial physical hurdles are jumped.

Spiritual experiences aren't tied to exercise in an isolated way, but occur in a wide variety of ways. Rastetter says she finds that certain vehicles can transform situations into spiritual experiences. Music and nature are two such vehicles for her.

"You put the cleansing aspect of exercise with one or both of these, and it's perfection," Rastetter says.

Just what is "cleansing?" A feeling of renewal that may stem from mental clarity, physical removal of toxins or the combination of the two is experienced by many regular exercisers. Those newer to regular exercise or working on measurement parameters, such as heart rate or distance or time, may experience lesser effects. For most, the relationship with exercise that promotes an emotional tie evolves over time. Rastetter says her own motivation to exercise began as one tied to vanity and empowerment.

"I'd be remiss to suggest that I don't care about what I look like or feel like anymore or that a good hard run doesn't empower me still, but those things are like icing on the cake. They are added benefits to a spiritual journey."

With prayer, meditation or religious practice, there is often routine, regimen and discipline. The same is true of spiritually-enhanced exercise. Spiritually-laced benefits of physical activity are both acute and chronic, sustaining an hour-long practice or walk and, as easily, last through the day or the week. Your own optimal experience may come solo or in a group.

"I've been blessed to practice Kundalini yoga with a group of women that has been

very spiritual. That being said, the most Divine experiences of my life so far have been when I've been running or walking alone in nature," Rastetter says.

As the air begins to take on a slight chill in the early and latter hours of the day, our days of ease of exercise in nature may be numbered.

Come winter, Rastetter's spiritual exercise won't suffer.

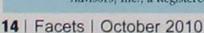
"My favorite exercise is now snow shoeing. If you're a person that suffers from winter blues, I suggest being in it. There is nothing quite as

cleansing and spiritual as hiking in the quiet of winter.

What I choose to do
for exercise definitely comes
from an intuitive place.
Instead of doing
what my head is telling me
I should do, I listen more to what

my soul wants for the day," Rastetter says of her walk rather than run through the woods.

Whether indoors, outdoors, alone or united with others, or whether in the crisp fall air or the icy freshness of winter, "being" as opposed to "striving" seems to be the common denominator for spiritual experience. At peace, present and in the moment, rather than judging, wanting and struggling.



book review 'THE RED TENT'

By MOLLY CLARK

hearing the Bible story about Jacob and his 12 sons, including Joseph who went on to become the Prince of Egypt. The story that is not as well known is the story of Jacob's only daughter, Dinah, and Jacob's four wives: Leah, Rachel, Zilpah and Bilhah. There is some mention of these women in the Bible, and the story that is told about Dinah is a tragic one.

Anita Diamant's fictional novel,
"The Red Tent," is a new take on
this well-known tale. This compelling story, told from the perspective of Dinah, gives us a
glimpse into her life and the
lives of the other women in
Jacob's tribe.

It tells a very different story about Dinah than the one that some of us are familiar with. In the Bible story, it is said that Dinah was raped by a Prince named Shechem. However, this book suggests that the two were actually in love.

During biblical times, women were made to seclude themselves while menstruating or



MOLLY CLARK

giving birth in a place called the red tent, which a good majority of this book is focused on. In the red tent, the other women in the

tribe would help each other through those trying times. The women had many rituals in the red tent, which were unknown to the men of the tribe.

Young Dinah is fascinated by the red tent as a child, before she is allowed to enter it. One part of the book tells about when Dinah first begins to menstruate, and the women perform an elaborate ceremony to celebrate her transition into womanhood. The red tent helps these women become very close, and bonds them together in a special way that makes them stronger.

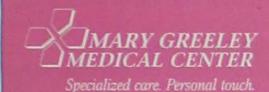
Dinah learns many things growing up, essentially, with four mothers, although her birth mother was Leah. They teach her everything from cooking to weaving to ancient stories of gods and goddesses to help guide her through life. Each of her mothers tells about a particular goddess that she feels the most connected to.

Eventually, Dinah learns from Rachel to be a skilled midwife. Much of the book recounts Dihah and Rachel's experiences helping women through child-birth. Rachel teaches Dinah herbal remedies used in birthing, as well as techniques to calm the scared new mothers. The book also tells the story of Dinah's life from her struggles

with marriage to being a mother herself and a falling out with her father and brothers.

The accounts of childbirth are the most compelling part of this novel. Not knowing much about how women lived during biblical times, it was especially interesting to learn how they dealt with things such as giving birth during that time, long before the medical advancements that we have today. One of the most moving things about this aspect of the book is a song about brave mothers that Rachel teaches Dinah to sing to calm the women while giving birth.

I think it is easy for women, even today, to identify with Dinah's struggles and those of the other women in Jacob's tribe, as well the women that she encounters outside the tribe. These women relied heavily on faith and the support of other women to get them through each day.





October is Breast Cancer

Awareness Month



Are you over 40?

The American Cancer Society recommends women over the age of 40 have yearly mammograms. Schedule yours online today at www.mgmc.org or call 515-956-6440.





girlfriend's guide to financial independence | MOVING ON

Go explore

By KAREN PETERSEN

I Bank...
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"Power Banking is helpful for us to automatically save for our daughter's education."

Jaime and Chad West



heard, "Go explore." I looked up to see a toddler checking out his surroundings.

■ While his mother watched, this one-year-old was moving on. He had a smile on his face and no fear. He didn't know he could get hurt, get lost, encounter something scary or be in an uncontrollable situation. He had space and he was ready to move on.



KAREN PETERSEN

The financial decisions we make in life are like the little boy's explorations. From the first day we begin to make our own financial and personal decisions, we are exploring, we are "moving on" to what lies ahead in life.

Sometimes we hang on too tightly, try to second-guess ourselves, agonize over every decision, and at times become so concerned about life that we can't make a decision. Other times we have the confidence to make a careful decision and then just enjoy the ride.

In my next few columns, I am going to focus on the many moving-on situations in our lives. I want to talk with women at various stages in their lives and tell their story of moving on.

Moving on life events

Think about this short list of life changes; times that we move on to the next stage of life

- You move from home to begin your first year of college.
- Very soon you are taking your first job in a new city.
 - · You begin a new life as a couple.
 - The first time you hold your baby.
- You help move your child from home to begin college.

And all the decisions and changes you continue to make in life until suddenly, it seems, you are selling your home and moving to a retirement community.

How we handle the changes in life, the time we move on from one part or phase of life to the next, determines our quality of life.

As much as we would all like to make our own decisions about life changes, sometimes someone or something creates changes, and we are, it would seem, just along for the ride.

And even though I seriously believe life is more than money, I also know that all life choices have financial consequences. How we make those choices dictates the kind of life we live.

Share your story

Would you share your story about managing the moving-on events in your life? I

would like to write about your decisions, disappointments, successes and insights. You may be at the beginning of your life events or much farther along life's paths; wherever you are, I would like to share your story.

The roller coaster

As I watched that one-year-old explore, I talked with his mother. She told me her philosophy about living life. "You know life is like a roller coaster. We all get on at the same place and we all get off at the same place. We do get to choose how we ride."

We can:
• Squeeze our eyes closed so we see

- o squeeze our eyes closed so we see nothing.
- Hold on so tightly our knuckles are white.
- Curse the person that decided to take us on the ride.
 - Hate every twist and turn.
- Just count the seconds until the ride is over.

Or we could choose to:

- Realize we are not getting off until the car stops and we might as well just enjoy the ride.
- Let go of the safety bar, scream and laugh, and enjoy every twist and turn.
- Thank the person in your life for the excitement.
 - · Love every part of the ride.
- Decide to be ready for and enjoy the next ride.

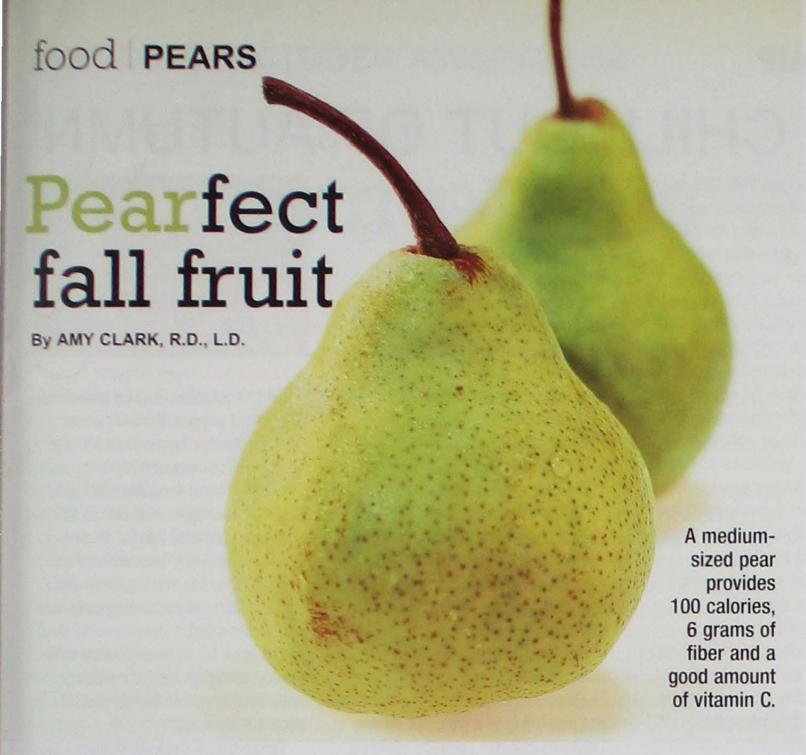
Do you choose to enjoy the ride? We all get off at the same place and ... life is more than money.

If you are willing to share the story of your moving on choices, please call (515) 232-2785 or e-mail karen@mymorethanmoney.net.

Because life is ... more than money.

Karen L. Petersen CFP® CDFA™ is a feebased financial advisor. You can contact her at (515) 232 2785 or at karen@mymore thanmoney.net.

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here is nothing quite like a ripe, juicy pear. They have a sweet, delicate flavor with a pleasant aroma. The tender, edible skin is a delicious source of heart-healthy fiber and disease-fighting phytochemicals, and adds a touch of color to any recipe. A mediumsized pear provides 100 calories, 6 grams of fiber and a good amount of vitamin C.

Pears are one of the few fruits that don't ripen on the tree. They ripen best at room tempera-



AMY CLARK

ture at home. Don't let the color of the pear fool you into thinking they are ripe and ready to eat. The best way to test for ripeness is to "check the neck." Just apply gentle pressure to the pear neck at the stem end with your thumb. A ripe pear will yield to pres-

sure, giving you a sweet, juicy treat.

Enjoy the many delicious varieties while they are in season. There are several pear varieties available to suit any taste or use.

ANJOU: A popular pear with a super-sweet flavor when fully ripe. Anjou pears are juicy and flavorful. Best eaten fresh or poached.

BOSC: Don't be fooled by the russet-brown skin. Bosc pears top the list when it comes to flavor and aroma. Firm texture, nutty aroma. They have a dense flesh that is ideal for baking and cooking, such as in preserves, pies, muffins or poaching.

BARTLETT: Most versatile pear variety. A perfect pick for fresh eating. Bartlett pears are

MAPLE-ROASTED PEARS

Yield: 2 servings (2 pear halves each).

All you need

- 3 tablespoons sugar-free maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 firm, ripe Bartlett pears, halved lengthwise and cored

1/4 cup chopped walnuts, optional

All you do

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Combine maple syrup and water in an 8-inch-square glass baking dish. Place pears, cut side down, in dish. Roast pears 15 minutes. To serve, drizzle pears with pan juices and if desired, top with whipped topping.

Nutrition facts per serving: 110 calories, 32g carbohydrate, 1g protein, 0g fat, 0g saturated fat, 6g fiber, Omg cholesterol, 45mg sodium.

> Source: Hy-Vee Test Kitchen, Try-Foods International

sweet and juicy with a flavorful aroma. The skin will become bright yellow or red when fully ripened. An excellent choice for canning, baking, drying or eating fresh.

COMICE: Very sweet, flavorful and juicy. Light spot and blemishes don't affect flavor. Best eaten fresh and in salads.

SECKEL: Smallest pear and very sweet. Perfect for snacking and preserves.

This information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a medical professional for individual advice.



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TAKING THE CHILL OUT OF AUTUMN

By DEBORAH BUNKA

T f you are looking for something to warm your insides

when the chilly fall air is telling you that colder days aren't far off, lentil soup may be just what you need. This is a one-pot soup that



DEBORAH BUNKA

practically cooks itself. Serve hot with a drizzle of red wine vinegar on top and a slice of crusty bread on the side, and you've got the makings of the perfect antidote to brisk fall weather.

If you haven't cooked with lentils before, you'll find them surprisingly easy to prepare, much like cooking rice on the stovetop. Put the lentils in a pot and add water and salt. The only caution is to not overcook or the results will be a mushy mess.

What really gives this recipe its flavor are the vegetables. Celery, onions and carrots are the foundation of many delicious soups and stew broths. Nothing else is really required and, in fact, in many versions of this recipe the basil, oregano and thyme are listed as optional along with the tomatoes and red wine vinegar. I always add the herbs because they support the flavor of the broth, making the taste fuller and a little more familiar. For the same reason, I always add the tomatoes.

Finally, I would encourage you to throw a few dashes of red wine vinegar into your lentil soup. The acidity contrasts nicely with the earthy, base flavor of the lentils, enhancing the overall flavor of the dish. Stay warm.

LENTIL SOUP

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

Ingredients:

- 8 cups dry lentils
- 8 cups water
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 8 medium cloves of garlic, crushed
 - 2 cups chopped onion
 - 2 stalks celery, chopped
 - 2 carrots, diced
 - 1 teaspoon basil
 - 1/2 teaspoon thyme
 - 1/2 teaspoon oregano

Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Optional: 3 medium, ripe tomatoes or 1 28-oz. canned diced tomatoes; red wine vinegar to drizzle individually over top

Directions

Place lentils, water and salt in a pot and bring to a boil. Put on low heat and simmer partially covered for 30 minutes.

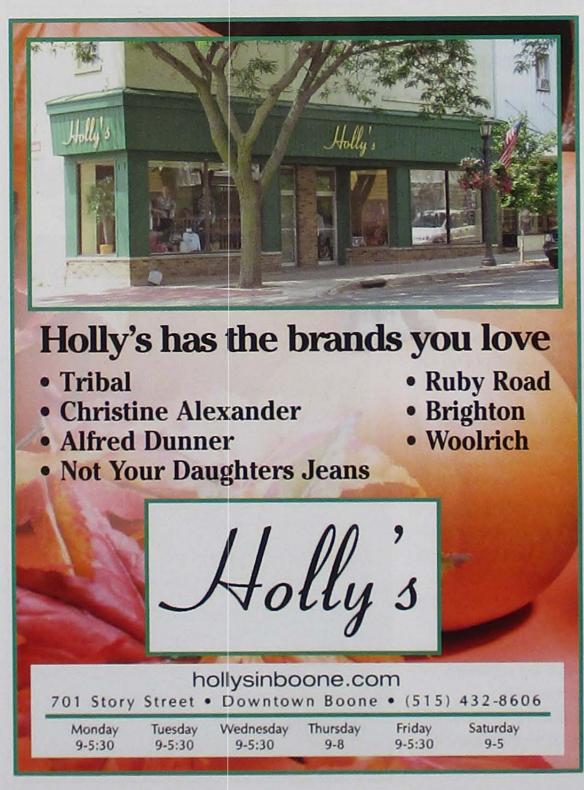


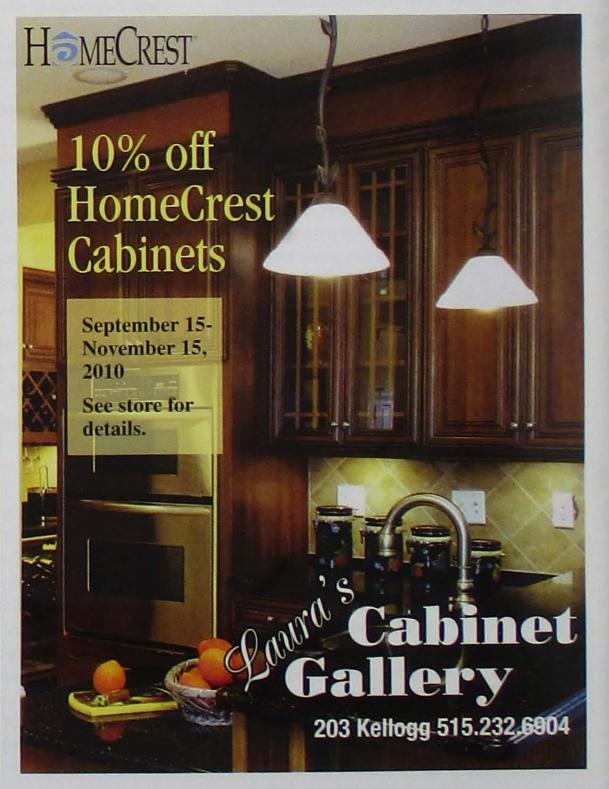
Add vegetables (except tomatoes), herbs and pepper. Partially cover and let simmer for another 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

If using fresh tomatoes, bring a medium saucepan of water to full boil. Drop tomatoes in for 10 seconds and remove from water. Peel off tomato skins and squeeze out seeds. Chop the remaining pulp and add to the soup.

Let cook for at least 5 more minutes. If using canned, diced tomatoes, simply add to lentils and let cook a little longer.

Serve hot. If desired, drizzle a bit of red wine vinegar into the soup.





skin care october awareness

Be aware of these

skin symptoms

KATHY L.P. COOK, M.D.

Cancer Awareness month, especially

due to the efforts of Susan G.
Komen for the Cure.
For an inspirational book, read "Promise Me" by her sister,
Nancy G. Brinker,
about Suzy's battle with breast cancer.



KATHY COOK

October is also the awareness month for other skin diseases. It is Lupus Awareness

month, National Eczema Awareness month and Celiac Awareness month, all of which have skin manifestations as the primary or secondary findings.

Lupus is an autoimmune disease. The word lupus is derived from the Latin word for wolves as the facial lesions were believed to look like wolf bites. Women are more likely to have it, and it is more common in African-Americans, Asians and Native Americans.

About 16,000 people were diagnosed with lupus last year.

There are four main types including coetaneous, systemic, drug-induced and neonatal. Lupus can damage any part of the body. Autoimmune means your immune system can't tell the difference between foreign invaders, such as bacteria and viruses, and your own tissue and creates proteins that attack themselves. The cause is unknown, but possibly people with genetic disposition have something that triggers the disease and symptoms. Symptoms vary with the type of lupus. For more information on symptoms, the hupus foundation of America's web site is www.lupus.org.

It is estimated that 31.6 million Americans have eczema. About 10 percent to 20 percent of young children and infants and 1 percent to 3 percent of the adult population have some form of eczema. Eczema refers to a family of skin conditions that cause the skin to become swollen, irritated and itchy. Signs of eczema include dry sensitive skin, intense itching, red and inflamed skin, recurring rash or scaling areas, rough leathery patches, oozing or crusting, areas of swelling, or dark patches.

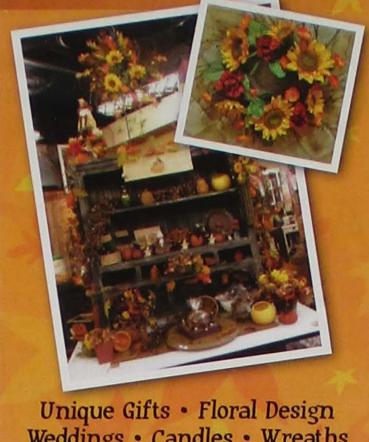
There are many triggers including irritants, such as soap and detergent; bacteria; aller-

gens, such as dust mites, pets, and pollens; and heat and cold. Allergic reactions to plants, such as poison ivy, or nickel allergy are better understood than other forms of eczema. The National Eczema Association's website is www.nationaleczema.org, which provides good information about different types of eczema and tips on helping control the symptoms of eczema.

Celiac disease is a hereditary autoimmune disorder caused by eating a type of protein called gluten, which damages the intestines. Gluten is found in all forms of wheat and related grains, such as rye, barley and hybrids of these grains, but not oats. If celiac symptoms exist long enough, nutrients cannot be absorbed. One in every 133 Americans are affected, particularly those of northern European dissent. Dermatitis herpetiformis, an intense itching or burning eruption typically on both sides, such as both elbows, is the skin manifestation of gluten sensitivity. The prevalence of DH is 10 per 100,000 people. More than 90 percent of people with this diagnosis have evidence of a gluten-sensitive small intestine disease. However, only about 20 percent of DH patients have intestinal symptoms of celiac disease. Both the skin and the intestinal disease respond to gluten restriction. There are many more gluten free products available on the grocery shelves in the past few years, making this an easier diet to follow. More valuable information is available at www.celiac.org.

Other conditions that have awareness time in October include sarcoidosis and blindness. Sarcoid is known as the "great pretender" due to many different presentations and different organs that can be involved. Sarcoid is the formation of granulomas (clumps of inflammatory cells that group together). When too many cells clump, they interfere with organ function. Skin lesions occur in one forth of patients. Specific lesions are chronic, violet thickened areas on the nose, ears, lips or face. Check the website www.stopsarcoid.org for additional information.

Blindness has a skin connection in that cataracts are the leading cause of blindness (48 percent), and one of the causes of cataracts is exposure to UV light. So in my daily advice on sun protection, I include wearing sunglasses beginning in infancy to protect your valuable vision. Websites for blindness prevention information include www.asces.org and www.nei.nih.gov.



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something to look forward to | GLAMOROUS WAVES

How do you get those glamorous waves and curls that you always see on the runway, i.e. the Victoria Secret model hair?

This is a great question, because these waves are one of the most in-demand hairstyles by women of all ages. First, you

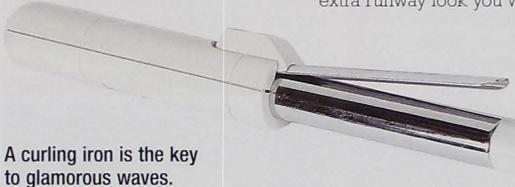
want to start with a dry head of hair and have a curling iron on hand. Using two-inch sections of hair and a large barrel curling iron, curl your whole head of hair. Note: if your hair does not hold curl, you should be spraying the sections of hair as you curl with a holding hair spray in order to help hold the hair in place longer. Once your entire head of hair is curled, run your hands through the curls so they do not have such a defined look to them. You will not want to use a brush when trying to break the curls up because



JOSHUA DUCHENE

this will break the curls up too much and you will not get the wavy look you want. Depending on the texture of your hair, you may want to take a texture paste and rub it through your hair in order to

control frizz. A shine serum is also a great product to rub through the hair to give you that extra runway look you want.



I just recently noticed gray hair poking through my brown hair. Do you think this gray will make me look older? If so, should I color it back to my natural color?

This is a common question, because many feel L that gray hair will make them look or feel older. This, however, is not always true. Believe it or not, gray hair can brighten your face up, allowing features on your face to not be so dark. Gray hair does not have to carry the stigma that you're getting old with it. Often times, if you have the right cut and style, a head of gray hair can make any women stand out in a crowd in a very positive way. The main thing to remember is that if you decide to let your gray stay, you want a trendy, chic cut, not something that says "old lady hair." If you are concerned about what color of gray you will eventually end up with, you can look to your parents for a forewarning, then head to your stylist to get his or her opinion on which route to go. Going gray does not have

to be a scary process; it can show that you have experience and that you are chic and natural.

There are so many salons in my town, and I'm new to the area. How do I pick?

Finding a new salon to settle at is hard to do, mainly because there are many creative cosmetologists who are all unique in their techniques. When choosing a salon, it's key to find a place that is welcoming, friendly and has an atmosphere that sets it apart from the rest. What an individual needs to do is step back and look at the larger picture.

- Are the stylists well-educated in the industry and trained in the latest trends in hairstyling?
- Does the salon follow up on satisfaction of the services and products offered?
- Are prices comparable to other salons in surrounding areas? Personally, customer service is one of the most important keys when finding a new place; the rest is simply each individual's opinion.

Facets calendar | october highlights

FRIDAY, OCT. 1

ISU Theatre production of "Orpheus Descending" — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Fisher Theater in Ames. Warning: Contains offensive language. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors and \$8 for students.

MONDAY, OCT. 4

Berenstein Bears in "Family Matters: The Musical" — A Theatreworks USA production. Shows are at 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Tickets are \$4 in advance or \$5 at the door.

TUESDAY, OCT. 5

ISU Symphonic Youth Concert
 Show begins at 10 a.m. at C.Y.
 Stephens Auditorium. Tickets are \$4

THURSDAY, OCT. 7

Comedian Brian Regan — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Admission is \$37.50.

FRIDAY, OCT. 8

"Legally Blonde: The Musical"

— Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Tickets are \$45 to \$49 for adults, \$25 for youth, and \$20 for ISU students.

SATURDAY, OCT. 9

"Orpheus Descending" — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Fisher Theater in Ames. Warning: Contains offensive language. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors and \$8 students.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 13 ISU Jazz Ensembles I and II —

Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall in the Music Building at ISU. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students. Tickets available at the door.

THURSDAY, OCT. 14

David Sedaris — This playwright and well-known commentator will be at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium. Show begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$35 to \$43 for adults, \$28 for youth, and \$25 for ISU students.

FRIDAY, OCT. 15

Symphonic Band — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Ames City Auditorium. Cost is \$7 for adults and \$5 for students. Tickets available at the door.

SATURDAY, OCT. 16 ISU Wind Ensemble — Show

begins at 3 p.m. at Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall in the Music Building at the ISU campus. Cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students. Tickets available at the door.

FRIDAY, OCT. 22

"Spring Awakening" — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Tickets are \$45 to \$49 for adults, \$25 for youth, and \$20 for ISU students.

SUNDAY, OCT. 24

ISU Music Faculty Recital — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall in the Music Building at ISU.

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Tickets are \$33 to \$37 for adults, \$25 for youth, and \$20 for ISU students.

in advance and \$5 at the door.

faceted woman LISA BAILEY MONTGOMERY

Name: Lisa Bailey Montgomery Age: 44

Position: Entrepreneur, business

Family: Married with four children

What would you do with \$1,000 to spend on yourself?

I would go on a relaxing trip, with my husband, where there are beaches and sun!

Your favorite motto:

Whether you think you can or you can't, you're right.

What makes you happy?

Finding a balance between work and family. My husband and I have four children together, so at times, it's very difficult to find a balance between work and the kids and all their activities. I love to be there for my kids and guide them through life ... That is, of course, when they take my advice. When the balance is there, I'm fulfilled and very happy!

What makes you feel confident?

Doing well in my business in expanding and growing it, and watching how people react in a positive way to what I'm trying to accomplish. It makes me want to keep going and reach for new goals! Also, when I can have a positive influence on my kids, and they can learn from what I'm trying to do, I think that will have a positive effect on them as well. I hope it will help them be confident in life and to go after what they truly want. I think every parent wants that for their children.

What have you accomplished that has made you proud?

Having a successful faux painting business for eight years, and



Contributed photo

Lisa Montgomery, owner of Distinctive Decorating by Lisa LLC, stands behind examples of products she created in her office in Ankeny.

now diversifying my business to offer faux artwork in many different forms. I offer faux wall art in various sizes and shapes to hang on the wall or display on an easel. I also make unique wine coasters to hold wine bottles and tabletop pieces with candles. I'm also involved in product development with a contact in China and will be launching a new product line in a few months. Watching my business grow has brought me great pleasure, and the people and relationships I've built along the way have been critical in growing my business.

Best tip to look and feel great:

If you take care of yourself from the inside (healthy spirit, healthy food and a positive attitude), the outside will shine through for everyone to see. It will make you feel terrific!

How do you take care of yourself financially?

I faux paint. There are 20 different techniques that I offer. My product is for sale in three locations: Urban Mix in Ankeny, Dave's Hair Care in Des Moines, and Baer's Hair and Tan in Bondurant.

If you could do or be anything you want, what would it be?

I would love to go to China and continue to develop products. I have a lot of fresh, new ideas, and I'd like to have the opportunity to learn everything I can about the business.

If you knew then what you know now, what would you have done differently?

I would go after my dreams and what I want sooner instead of waiting for it to happen. I figured out that believing in myself and what I can do is what makes the difference between success and failure! Also, never give up, and don't take no for an answer!

My simplest pleasure:

Taking time to read books on my Kindle. I love to read, but rarely have enough time.

I am thankful for:

My family, my friends, my clients, and everyone who has touched my life in certain ways. I believe God puts people in your path for a reason and what you do with it is up to you. I appreciate all the people that have been put in my path, that have touched me in a positive way!

What financial advice would you give other women?

Try to have multiple sources of income, so if one isn't bringing in revenue, you have backups that will. I have three sources of income, and they usually produce at different times. Also, when you start to build your business, try not to think of roadblocks as failures. Instead, think of them as learning curves to grow and expand your business. I believe things happen for a reason, and people and situations are put in our paths to take us where we need to go. Listen and learn from your mistakes, and rather than letting them get you down, think of them as an opportunity to grow personally as well as financially. If you do this, things will start to fall into place and your business will grow and thrive. Pay attention as you go through the process and utilize the people that can help you in your journey to success.

How do you give back to your community?

I volunteer at my local church and would like to give more when I can.



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hue & cry WHAT IS FAITH? (Hue and cry: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.)

By MARY HALSTRUM Facets Editor

That is faith? What does it mean to have faith? These are questions I ask myself quite often with regard to my own life.

To me, faith means believing in something greater and more powerful than myself. It's not something I can really see or touch, but rather something I can feel. When I face challenges in life, faith is the belief that someday things will get better. That whatever I am going through, or whatever problem I have, it's only temporary.

I have faith in my family, friends, community and mankind. I believe that when life gets tough, having faith in all the good in the world, rather than focusing on the bad, will help me move through whatever muck I'm stuck in.

Having faith in what could be around the corner is often how I



MARY HALSTRUM

deal with the challenges life presents me on a daily basis.

This past year has been one of the most financially challenging ever for my family. My husband has been laid off for 13 months, we've had to make major repairs to both of our vehicles, and the kids keep growing out of their clothes as little ones do. And there are still birthdays and Christmas, which we've scaled down immensely, but things aren't getting any easier, and we don't expect them to any time soon.

But during this time, my faith in my extended family has really been strengthened. When we

couldn't afford for our older daughter to continue to take riding lessons, an anonymous donor donated unlimited lessons to her. I cried when her riding teacher told us the news. If you knew Katharine, you'd know that she is first and foremost a horse person. When the transmission needed replacing in one of our vehicles, my husband's parents stepped forward to loan us the money to fix it. Then, when the transmission needed replacing in our other vehicle, my father stepped forward to loan us the money for that. As time neared for the start of school, my mother and stepfather knew we couldn't possibly get the money together for our older daughter to continue her private education, so they gave us the money for that.

I have faith that with a lot of hard work, a better economy and maybe a little bit of luck, this too shall pass. And I never forget that even though right now we are struggling, we still have it better than most of the people in the world. So if I'm ever feeling sorry for our situation, I remind myself that it could be worse, and it is for so many.

Some people are faced with more adversity or have more crosses to bear. I can't explain it, I don't know why, and maybe I don't even want to. In fact, I think it might be above my pay grade. I feel like I'm kind of on a need-to-know basis, and there are some things I just don't need to know. I believe I can't see the big picture. But hopefully, someone or something else can.

My faith in better days ahead keeps me trudging along, one day at a time, knowing that someday my husband will have a full-time job again. Someday, the economy will rebound. And hopefully someday will come soon. In the meantime, I'll just tie a knot and hold on, because nothing lasts forever, the bad times or the good. Faith in that knowledge will pull me through, just like it always does.



No matter what your situation is The Ames Contracting Team can help...

As the Madden family approached 20 years in their home, they started to think seriously about updating their bathrooms. "I'd been thinking of redoing them," recalled Bev Madden, "but kept putting off all the necessary planning to accomplish everything we had in mind."

The cherry cabinets were in great shape, but we hoped to replace just about everything else," she explained. "We preferred floor-to-ceiling tile with a glass shower door instead of the increasingly hard-to-clean shower unit; a tiled floor over the aging vinyl; a water-saving toilet; and replacing the worn vanity top, sink and, faucet." The project was an extensive one and would require the involvement of multiple contractors.

"When we learned of Monte Gibbs' Ames Contracting Team concept, we knew that could be the way to go!" One call to Ames Contracting Team brought six experts to the Madden home to assist them in the planning of their first major interior remodel. Madden explained that this ensured all parties involved understood every aspect of the project and remained on the same page throughout.

She described the process that followed, "Laura of ReD Staging & Design first met with me to listen to our preferences, then brought back a few color samples and tile ideas that were truly helpful in defining the focus of the entire project. The Flooring Gallery worked with us on specific floor and shower tile sizes, pattern design and installation, as well as helping to choose the ideal new wallpaper. Tim from Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, did all the plumbing. Geisinger Construction built the new shower

walls, added the cherry panels flanking the mirror for the sconces, and installed the new medicine cabinet. Thompson Electric installed the sconces along with the dimmer switch and a new GFI outlet. Winkler Painting provided the wonderful finishing touches by painting the ceiling, staining the wooden sconce panels to match the existing cabinets, and hanging the wallpaper."

Madden was impressed by how well coordinated the project was and the ease with which the numerous businesses worked together.

"We particularly appreciated Monte Gibbs' leadership and attention to detail through the planning process. He minimized the time from demolition to completion by assuring everything was in the warehouse prior to starting. Tim, as the project general contractor, kept the process moving along smoothly from the first step of laving down protective canvas tarps to the very last finishing details. He kept in touch with us as he daily coordinated the work of the Ames Contracting Team.

We found the entire team easy to work with and appreciated, all through the process, their collective ideas that enhanced the bathroom appearance and cut both costs and time as the project progressed."

The Madden family is thoroughly enjoying the updates they have made to their home. "The new look and feel of the bathroom absolutely exceeds everything we had anticipated -- we couldn't be more pleased." She offers the highest form of praise to the Ames Contracting Team. The family has plans to hire them again soon to remodel a second bathroom in their home











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